WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION
Office of Distribution
Marketing Reports Division
821 Market Street - Room 700
San Francisco 3, California
Western Region

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE

HIGHLIGHTS FROM MARKET NEWS REVIEWS
Week Ending May 19, 1944

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Onions - Although the peak of the Texas early onion crop is now past, that state is still shipping an average of over 180 cars per day. Total shipments this season to date are 5616 cars. F.O.B. sales on Crystal white onions has dropped 25¢ during the week to $1.50 and $1.75 per 50 lb. sk. for most sales.

Onions from the San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys in California are now moving to market in carload lots. A wide range in quality and condition has resulted in prices from $1.00 up. Graded onions of good quality have brought ceiling prices.

Potatoes - This season's shipments of potatoes in the United States still continue above last season's shipments. The new crop shipments now total 10533 cars compared to 9034 cars for last year by May 19th. Shipments from the Western Region, however, particularly Kern County, California, are much below the previous two years due to late crop, although total season expected to be great as last. This weeks shipments brings the total 2835 cars compared to 3474 cars for 1943 and 4395 cars for 1942. No f.o.b. prices were quoted today and shipments were being "rolled" unpriced pending clarification of the OPA price regulation.

Wholesale prices on western markets for Kern County U.S. #1 size A are mostly $4.00 to $4.25 per cwt; on Eastern markets $4.75 to $5.50.

Lettuce - F.O.B. shipping point sales, Salinas District, California, have been running mostly $3.10 per crate of 4 to 5 dozen heads. On the Eastern wholesale markets, this lettuce, in less than carload lots has brought from $4.72 to $5.29. Western wholesale markets report prices ranging from $3.25 per crate, or about 8 cents per head in San Francisco, to $4.40 per crate, or close to 10 cents per head in Portland.

Cherries - Sacramento and San Joaquin Valley, California cherries of the following varieties are reaching the markets, Chapmans, Tartarians and Royal Annes. From Santa Clara County, California, the markets are receiving Burbanks. West Coast wholesale prices run from 15 cents per lb. on loose Chapmans to Royal Annes at 30 cents. Prices last year on this same date ranged from 16 cents on Chapmans to 36 cents on Royal Annes. The California crop this year is estimated at 58,400,000 lbs. compared to 24,400,000 lbs. in 1943. Fruits which are making their appearance this week in quantity on Western markets, for the first time this year, are raspberries from Santa Clara County, California, cantaloupes from Imperial Valley, California and watermelons from Mexico.

GRAIN PRODUCTS

Wheat - On May 16 WFA announced the following loan program prices on wheat produced in 1944;

No. 1 hard winter at Kansas City and Omaha $1.44 per bushel; Galvaston $1.52;

(over)

Chicago $1.49; No. 1 Softwhite or Western white at Portland, Oregon $1.39; No. 1 Dark Northern Spring at Minneapolis $1.46; No. 1 Red Winter at Chicago and St. Louis $1.49; Baltimore $1.60 and Louisville $1.51. The lower grades such as U. S. 3 or better, U.S. 4 or U.S. 5 because of test weight only will be eligible for loan.

The national average loan this year is $1.28 per bushel compared to an average of $1.23 for last year.

Corn - The corn producing states report a generally active planting program for that crop however it is till considerably behind normal years.

Alfalfa - Producing areas of Kansas and Nebraska have reported improved field conditions and new crop first and second cuttings of alfalfa show good growth f.o.b., field prices for the new crop of alfalfa in Kansas runs $13.00 per ton dry weight to mills and in Nebraska $12.00 per ton.

In California the alfalfa harvest has advanced well toward the completion of the second cutting. Indications at present are that the second crop is slightly under normal. The Los Angeles market closed the week at $31.50 to $33.50 on U.S. No. 1 certificated hay.

DAIRY AND POULTRY PRODUCTS - Western Consumers' demand for butter has continued in excess of supplies in contrast to a reduced demand on midwest and eastern markets. However Western consumers are reflecting indecision relative to the proportion of their points to place on butter and meats especially since there is some talk of resuming total meat rationing.

Storage holdings in the United States on May 1, 1944 according to WFA were 69,533,000 lbs. compared to 30,190,000 lbs. on May 1, 1943 and a 5 year average of 33,125,000 lbs. Of this years holdings DPMA had 9,547,000 lbs. and WFA 18,878,000 lbs.

Lower production and smaller set aside requirements have resulted in a lesser amount of butter going into cold storage this May than May of 1943.

Eggs - Supplies of eggs have continued heavy this week. Storage and processing plants are both hard pressed; the first for space for eggs and the latter because of insufficient help to keep their stocks moving. Home storage should still be stressed as a definite aid toward helping to level off the accumulation of supplies at market and storage centers.

Poultry - Poultry markets and poultry processing plants in the western markets were well supplied with leghorn hens. Chicken prices in some markets have declined during the week and in some cases processing plants have turned away offerings. These plants like the eggs processing plants appear to be experiencing difficulty in obtaining sufficient help.

LIVESTOCK AND MEATS

Hogs - This week again witnessed shipping embargoes placed on the movement of hogs into some of the principal markets. The embargoes were placed effective as of May 16th to assist in reducing "hold over" death rate during the beginning of the hot weather period. In the West receipts have been light and top prices for good choice 180-270 lb. barrows and gilts ranged from $13.75 to $14.75.

Sheep - Recent light rains in the interior California valleys are considered to be beneficial to sheep pastures especially those above the 1500 foot level where it is expected the good grazing may be extended an additional 30 days. This may have a tendancy toward lengthening the spring lamb deal and placing a larger percentage of lambs on the market in more nearly prime condition. Western good to choice spring lambs sold on western markets at $15.50.